

### Remarks

This Amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated May 30, 2003. Claim 1 has been amended, claims 3-8 have been canceled without prejudice, and new claims 9-21 have been added. Claims 1-2 and 9-26 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the specification because the equation on page 2, line 23 was not balanced. Applicant has amended to specification at page 2, line 23 to balance the equation as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully requests that the objection be withdrawn.

Applicant has amended the specification at various locations on pages 3-7 in order to delete reference to the claims.

Applicant has also amended the specification in the paragraph at page 12, lines 3-8, to correct several typographic errors. Support for the changes may be found in the original Japanese language application as filed, at page 12, lines 2 and 5.

The Examiner objected to the drawings because they did not include a reference number mentioned in the specification. Applicant has also amended the specification in the paragraph at page 13, lines 5-10, to delete the reference number 48. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that this objection be withdrawn.

The Examiner also objected to Fig. 4. Applicant has amended Fig. 4 to recite the terms "Prior Art" and submitted a replacement sheet.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. Applicant has amended claim 1 to delete the terms "or the like". Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is in compliance with section 112.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,965,786 to Rostaig et al. Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, applicant has canceled claim 3 without prejudice to further prosecute the claim at a later time if desired.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Admitted Prior Art. Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's rejection and rationale regarding the combination

of references. However, to expedite prosecution, applicant has canceled claim 3 without prejudice to further prosecute the claim at a later time if desired.

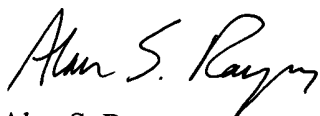
Claims 1-2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,569,810 to Tsuji in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,439,568 to Uchiyama. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has not met his burden to establish a suggestion or motivation in the art to modify the reference or to combine the reference teachings as required according to MPEP section 706.02(j). The Examiner stated that "it would have been obvious . . . to implement the plasma reactor as taught by Uchiyama in the apparatus of Tsuji in order to absorb and neutralize the resulting decomposition acidic products in water." However, the Examiner's citations do not establish a suggestion or motivation for the proposed combination. The Tsuji process as described by the Examiner appears to use a plasma to form a co-polymerized product that is accumulated in the tube or fixation member 14. The Examiner provided no rationale why one of ordinary skill would seek to change the co-polymer formation process and instead use the Uchiyama process, which decomposes the ozone layer depleting substances and then delivers the decomposed materials into a water tank to be absorbed. The Examiner's citations do not appear to describe a motivation for delivering the co-polymer to water. It is not clear why one of ordinary skill would desire to make the substitution and modification of Tsuji suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness and the rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claim 2 should be withdrawn.

New claims 9-26 have been added. Support for the claims may be found throughout the specification, figures and original claims. It is believed that no new matter has been entered. The Office Action also included various comments concerning the art and the non-patentability of features in various of the pending claims. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's non-patentability conclusions. The discussion above has directly addressed some of those comments and the Examiner's other comments are deemed moot at this time in view of this response. For at least the reasons stated above, applicant respectfully submits that the pending are in patentable form. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. If, for any reason, the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to

telephone the undersigned to discuss the steps necessary to place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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Alan S. Raynes

September 2, 2003  
(Date)